

STATINTL

State Dept. Leaks Were Probed by FBI

By JEFFREY ANTEVIL

Washington, Sept. 2 (NEWS Bureau)—Justice Department agents have been questioning State Department employees about recent leaks of sensitive information to the newspapers, a State Department spokesman disclosed today.

Questioned by newsmen, the spokesman, Robert J. McCloskey, would not say how many State Department employees were involved or whether lie detectors were used. But he said no disciplinary action resulted.

The probe, it was learned, was conducted by FBI agents.

Series of Probes

McCloskey said there was no single investigation but a series of them aimed at specific news stories.

He would not name any of the articles, but other officials said two recent incidents involved separate New York Times' stories quoting from a CIA report to the White House and setting out the U.S. negotiating position at the disarmament talks with the Soviet Union.

Another leak under investigation, sources said, was Jack Anderson's nationally syndicated column quoting from a secret government report on the drunken antics of a U.S. diplomat during Vice President Spiro Agnew's recent visit to Kenya in Africa.

McCloskey also said State Department officials have been told to use "discretion and common sense" in talking with newsmen about sensitive topics such as the forthcoming presidential visit to China.

"The Department has a deep concern when information that could be prejudicial to a national interest in foreign policy is published or broadcast," especially when it has been disclosed "by unauthorized persons," the spokesman said.

He added, however, that officials have not been told to limit their contacts with reporters. He declared that the department offers greater access to newsmen than any other foreign office in the world.

Approved by Rogers

"We have cooperated with agents of the Department of Justice who have undertaken investigations within the Department of State," McCloskey said. He would not say who ordered the agents into the State Department but he said it was done "with the full concurrence and approval" of Secretary of State William P. Rogers.